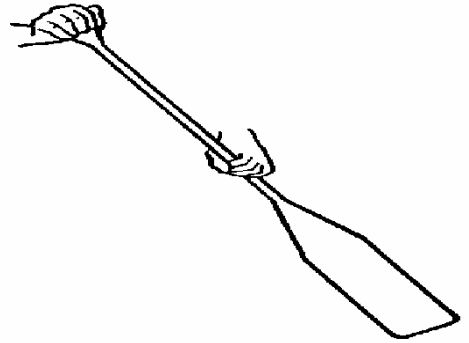


# BEGINNING CANOE STROKES

**1- Remember: safety first. ALWAYS wear a life vest, even if you're a strong swimmer. Canoes are unstable, so stay low, stay in the middle and don't move around a lot. And when you do have to move, warn your paddling partner first.**

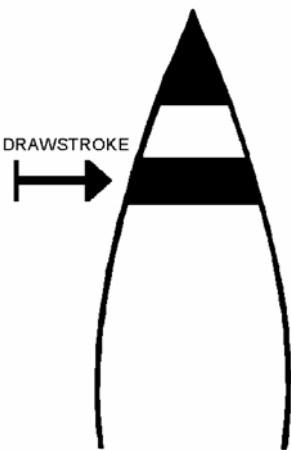
**2- Hold the paddle properly: place one hand comfortably over the grip and the other hand at the throat, perhaps 6 inches above the blade. Your hands on the paddle are now almost as far apart as they can get. Keep them that way.**



**3- Handle the paddle properly: put as much of the blade as possible into the water at each stroke. Your lower hand should almost touch the water. As you bring the blade out of the water, keep it low and flatten it out (feather it) so it splits the wind like an airplane wing. A little twist as the blade re-enters the water and you're ready for the next stroke.**

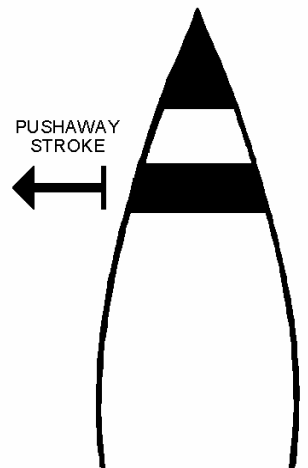
**4- Forward stroke: reach forward, dip the blade close to the canoe and pull back with the lower arm while pushing with the upper arm. Paddle on the opposite side of the canoe from your partner, and warn your partner before changing paddling sides.**

**5- Backstroke: just reverse the forward stroke.**



**6- Drawstroke: to turn the canoe, insert the paddle out in the water with the flat side facing you. Pull back with your lower hand.**

**To turn back the other way, use a Pushaway stroke: insert the paddle right next to the canoe and push away with your bottom hand.**



**7- These are just the basics. The stern paddler needs to know a greater variety of strokes in order to steer...so put the beginner up front.**